DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 225 152 CS 207 300

TITLE The British Way: A Report of the MSU English Education Programme, Bedford College, University of London, June 27-August 5, 1982.

INSTITUTION Michigan State Univ., East Lansing. Dept. of English.

PUB DATE 82

NOTE 19p.; Prepared by the participants of the MSU English Education Programme.

PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Educational Theories; *English Instruction; *English Teacher Education; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *Instructional Improvement; *International Programs; Student Needs; Student Teacher Relationship; *Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Characteristics; Teacher Effectiveness; *Teacher Improvement

IDENTIFIERS England (London); *Theory Practice Relationship

ABSTRACT

The Michigan State University (MSU) English Education in London program gave a group of American teachers direct contact with the developers of British educational theory, provided an opportunity for them to observe practice in actual classroom settings, and helped them reexamine their own attitudes and teaching. The program's consultant sessions encouraged teachers to make their theory and practice coherent, and to recognize the importance of enabling students to understand their own experiences through talking and writing. English teaching theory was examined critically, particularly the opposing poles of the literary critical frame of reference and the language in use frame. Visits to a variety of London schools and community education centers confirmed the need for concern about the gap between theory and practice and between financial needs and resources. The most important conclusion drawn from the experience of the program was the necessity of meshing sound theory with practical classroom application. Theory seems ahead of the practice of most teachers. Teachers must also understand the implications of their theories. Given the current financial and institutional climate, educators themselves must do everything they can to support the development and implementation of educational theory. (A bibliography and the program's syllabus are included.) (JL)

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ENGLISH EDUCATION IN LONDON

Department of English and
Office of Overseas Study
Michigan State University

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THE BRITISH WAY:

A Report of the

MSU ENGLISH EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Bedford College
University of London
June 27 - August 5, 1982

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Ruth Bauer
M. P. Cavanaugh
Diane Deremo
Judith Feldman
Craig Gunn
Shirley Harkless
Nancy Johnson
Douglas Jones
Mary Maguire
Matthew Nikkari
Shirley Washington
Stephen Judy (Instructor)

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Stephen Judy

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Part I:

TEACHER AS LEARNER

The MSU English Education in London programme brought together English teachers from across the United States and Canada, teachers with a wide range of experience: primary, secondary, and college levels in both public and private institutions. So who were we--the eleven people who flew to London to study English education? What kind of group came together on June 28? What were our expectations?

Some of us looked forward to rubbing shoulders with big names in British education; others were eager for personal visits with British teachers in their classrooms. Some wanted to absorb museums and theaters; others wanted to use their BritRail passes to visit outlying towns. Some planned to re-evaluate their theories of teaching English; others planned to sit back and let the British system's strengths be a guide to practice.

Margaret Meek Spencer opened our consultant sessions at Bedford College by asking a question that was to become a theme for the summer, "Does your theory match your practice?" Her question set the stage for six weeks of reflection on our own teaching theories and practice.

We became uneasy.

Challenges aren't new to us; we accept as well as expect them while dealing with our students. What was unique about the summer program was seeing ourselves in a learning situation. Our readings and consultant visits introduced new ideas about language and learning. Varying points of view and theories (not all our consultants agreed with one another) enabled us to think about what was happening in our own heads and classrooms. The result was a challenge--a confrontation taking place within each of us. We became critical spectators, visualizing ourselves in new teaching roles.

But teaching (as well as learning) is far more than spectating. It requires involvement--active participation--and so we entered the learner role as participants as well as observers.

One of our earliest consultants, John Dixon, doled out colored felt-tip pens and pieces of butcher paper; our task was mapping out our personal teaching histories, showing--somehow--the highs and lows, the plateaus and depths. Our immediate response to this doing-ness was a common apprehension: "Where do I start?" "How do I present my ideas?" "Should I use diagrams or prose?" "Am I doing it right?" But once we dealt with our false starts and our insecurities, an intense project was underway; and when we later explained our maps for the group, we could see the assignment captured the essence of why we teach. (Some of us extended those maps for ourselves at the end of the summer and saw the kind of growth that had taken place in us.)

The consultants continued to involve us. Paddy Creber challenged us as writers, actors, and directors as he divided the group into teams to create five-minute dialogues written for presentation by another team. The creative element was tapped and we found ourselves involved in a four-hour project of such intensity that we were drained--and exhilarated--when our brief moments on the stage were over.

In addition to our day of drama, Paddy Creber enabled us to "language" our own experiences as he led us through a "closed-eye process", remembering back to specific classes in school. He played music, showed slides, and read stories, and we saw how the British teacher can pull varied responses from his or her students.

With Leslie Stratta and Andrew Wilkinson and David Holbrook we looked in depth at students' writing, each time from a different perspective, each time discovering the depth of student creativity and seeing, as Holbrook phrased it, the way writing shows us "what it is to be human."

Visits to the schools of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) provided another kind of participation. In some schools we merely observed; in others teachers and students pressed us not only for an explanation of the U. S. system, but also for our impressions of British schools. Some even invited us to join in the teaching by reading aloud a passage that required an American accent or in talking with groups of students who were reconstructing a poem.

We kept journals of those six weeks, providing us with participation through introspection. We handled our learning directly on paper as we batted around new ideas, evaluated readings and consultant presentations, and expressed our questions, concerns, and beliefs. The importance of the journal varied from one of us to another--for some it provided an avenue for reactions; for others it was an outlet for re-evaluated philosophy. For all it established the importance of personal response--respect for our own experience.

The MSU English Education in London programme resulted in far more than the yellow promotional brochure had promised. It certainly gave us direct contact with the developers of British theory. It provided an opportunity for us to observe practice in actual classroom settings. But the unadvertised effect was to force us to become involved, at a variety of levels--each of us at his or her own level--in evaluation of ourselves and our teaching as well as The British Way. The occasional uneasiness--although very personal--was very real for each of us.

As one of our consultants said, "To be uneasy is to be alive."

(NJ, DJ)

DEATH IN THE PARK: THE LONDON BOMBING HORROR

Who could have anticipated that headline? Who could have expected our closeness to the Regent's Park bombing? For us it was involvement without direct involvement. We didn't see the explosion, but our classroom, 250 yards away, shuddered with the blast. We felt it. . . . We still do.

Part II:

SPEAKERS AND READINGS

Hurry up, please, it's time!

Is your theory your practice or your practice your theory?

It is past time for English educators to meet together to share the successful classroom practices which we have all intuitively evolved and to examine the theoretical assumptions about learning and the learner which underlie these practices. A few of us had opportunity for such "collaborative reflections" (Margaret Spencer) during the London programme. We came away from that experience inspired by urgent calls to make our theory and practice coherent.

There were some dicta common to our consultants:

--A student is not a repository of skills, but a communicative being.

--Talk brings language alive.

--The teacher should listen and record rather than dominate and direct.

--Writing is a way of discovering what you know.

--The teacher needs to help students find focus and organize experience.

--Evaluation of writing is best done as a teaching (rather than measuring) device.

--Teachers should promote among pupils a fidelity to their own experience whether actual or imaginary.

--Caring for children and teaching them are not different things.

--Conscious awareness of how you are going to say something often interferes with the message.

--We all have an inexhaustible supply of literary texts in our heads.

--All children are fluent in autobiographical storytelling.

--Language is learned in operation, not through dummy runs.

Again and again we were urged to enable students to come to a deeper understanding of their experience through talking and writing. Reading students' writing aloud in the class was construed by all as something valuable to do. Teaching literature was seen as a process of bringing students back into a text while moving them away from it to individual interpretation. We were told that teachers have the responsibility to move students to laughter and to tears, and all our consultants seemed to feel the need to inject "some thing" into the classroom to change children's lives.

Geoffrey Summerfield described the classroom as a galaxy in which revolve the student, the world, the teacher, and the text. Summerfield's visualization became a useful graphic organizer for the range of theories with which we were bombarded. They helped us put into focus David Holbrook's existential questions which, he argued, are the essence of English--both literature and student writing:

What is it to be human?
What is the point of life?
What is my world view?

But beyond the basic points of agreement, we need to look carefully at the state of English teaching theory, expecially at the divisions among what one of our speakers called "the London Institute/NATE orthodoxy" (Margaret Spencer, Harold Rosen, John Dixon, Andrew Wilkinson, Leslie Stratta), the "gadflies" (Peter Abbs, David Holbrook, and David Allen), and people like Paddy Creber and Geoffrey Summerfield who may serve as intermediaries. (References to their works will be found in the bibliography.)

The main polarity seemed to be between those who favor the literary critical frame of reference (Abbs and Holbrook, in particular) and the language-in-use frame (Rosen et al.) Yet, even here there were recurring leitmotifs which seemed to break down the polarities. Members of the "orthodoxy" went out of their way to respond to the charge that they had, over the years, neglected literature in favor of language and linguistics, and the more classically oriented programs of Holbrook and Abbs placed considerable emphasis on children's creative power through language.

And there were some ironic twists in the Great Debate. Allen's statement, "Civilization begins anew in each child," raises some interesting questions about language use and the cultural dimension for which Dixon has been chastized by Allen and Holbrook as neglecting in his personal growth model. Another irony in the debate is that advocates of the London Institute model of language growth are grappling with the charged multi-cultureal ethos and character of London schools, even while they are accused of "teaching linguistics" that is beyond the grasp of even sophisticated students. And Peter Abbs cuts through the debate with a proposal that would end it by transferring English, lock, stock, and barrel, into the creative arts where philosophers and historians (and presumably linguists and critics) could no longer get their hands on it.

Our London experience has important implications for teachers who have well-formulated constructs (conscious or unconscious) of what English is. As Dixon cautioned us, if we assume that theory is somewhere "out there," waiting to be discovered by theorists and absorbed by teachers, it will never get into the classroom, and teaching and scholarship will remain poles apart. Harold Rosen presented (through Margaret Spencer) the metaphor of the "cottage industry" of teachers and researchers collaborating together. And Spencer argued for the importance of teachers as creators of theory. The British model of the teaching centre is the most visible manifestation of this attitude of cooperation and collaboration. In North America we have spent too much time trying to make reality fit the theory instead of letting it grow from a particular situation or problem.

Hurry up, please, it's time.

(MM,SW)

Part III:

THE SCHOOL VISITS

Our school visits took place in early July, during the three weeks prior to the closing of British schools. As our London hosts and hostesses cautioned us, we were not seeing typical teaching. Usually the sixth formers had already left, having completed their examinations. The other forms, like North American classes in June, were ready to call it quits. Nevertheless, with five school visits per program participant to a total of eleven different schools, we feel we obtained a reasonably fair sample of what the British schools are like and what goes on in them at other times of the year.

With that cautionary note, we present our observations in the following general categories: inner-London schools (those we could locate on maps of metropolitan London); outer-London comprehensive schools (more "suburban" in character, listed in the A to Z guidebooks, but not shown on maps); all girls' schools; and church-affiliated schools.

The Inner London Comprehensive Schools. (Islington Green, Prebend St., NW 1; Clissold Park, Clissold Road, N4; Highbury Fields School, Highbury Hill, N5; Haverstock School, Crogsland Road, NW1; Quinton Kynaston, Marborough Hill, NW8; Hydeburn School, Chestnut Grove, SW 12; Thomas Tallis, Kidbrooke Park Road, SE 5.) The inner-London schools we visited were the least well maintained physical plants we saw. A great many faculty members expressed concern and distress over impending cutbacks and transfers. (It appears that London is about five years behind the U.S. in experiencing a decline in birthrate and the subsequent drop in school enrollment.) Nevertheless, despite difficult situations, many teachers were doing enthusiastic and energetic teaching, often with classes with a rich mixture of English and non-native students, the latter often having English as their second language. We saw some creative dramatics (as "advertised" as a feature of the British way), including whole classes of students collaborating on a play, first improvised, then scripted. We also saw some teaching that seemed remarkably familiar and not in keeping at all with the theorists' descriptions of what ought to be happening: for example, a teacher dragging students through a period-long lit crit analysis of a poem that utterly bored the students; or a teacher attempting to teach MacBeth to first formers (the age of American sixth graders). A few members of our group voiced a concern about what they perceived as the lack of challenge in some of the work the students were doing, and some of us felt there was too much "fun and games" and too little serious learning in some schools. At the same time, in many of the schools, work was highly individualized with students creating their own options and following through with them. We also learned that the British have developed scheduling patterns that frequently allow teachers to meet classes in small groups, two or three times each week, rather than five days a week in bunches of thirty as is the American way. American administrators and schedulers should take note, as the British way creates a much more relaxed and productive classroom environment.

The Outer London Comprehensive Schools. (Dunraven School, Mt. Nod Road, SW 16; Rushcroft School, Rushcroft Road, Walthamstow.) As our visits moved away from central London, the physical appearance of the schools improved. Grounds were more spacious; flowers were planted; the buildings were clean and in good repair. Though we only visited two of these schools, we suspect that this pattern is typical, as it would be in North America. At Dunraven

we observed one of the few upper forms still in session. This was an orientation program for students who will be in A-Level English in September. We observed the syllabus, which appeared to be largely dictated by the examinations looming at the end of the year. The teacher was a picture of the stereotypical English schoolmaster: upright, precise, dressed in suit and tie, deeply concern that his students understand the material and do well in the exams. Dunraven is not threatened by loss of faculty (yet), and so morale was high. At Rushcroft we spent all our time with one teacher and several of his students. The teacher reminded us of some of the more radical teachers in the U.S. in the early seventies, and he gave us an earful about the ways in which British schools have become increasingly conservative in the "Thatcherite" era. He was discouraged that innovative projects are no longer welcomed in his school, and he reported that he was retraining himself to move into computer science, a field which, as in the U.S. is faddish, but gives a creative teacher some room to work (and play).

All Girls' Schools. (Kidbrooke School, Corelli Road, SE 3; Camden School, Sandall Road, NW5; Highbury Fields School, Highbury Hill, N5.) It was a surprise for many of us to see all-girls' schools. Coupled with the school uniforms (which, in London, are gradually being downplayed to the point that the students wear clothes of uniform style and color, but not an official school uniform), schools with nothing but young ladies in them seemed very orderly and serious of purpose. Not that the kids were sedate, by any means. At Highbury Hill, they were lively and downright noisy, and they pushed us for our opinions on the Falklands war ("A very stupid war, really," they told us.). Kidbrooke, until two years ago, was all girls, but is now becoming a mixed school, as is the pattern throughout London. We saw much reading and writing going on at both Kidbrooke and Highbury Fields, with students working on continuing writing projects and individual reading (though reading keyed to the forthcoming examinations). The lessons we saw at Camden were well-planned and creative: One class was reading aloud from a novel (the British have their students read aloud a great deal); another was reviewing for an examination (the British do a lot of that, too); a fourth form was reading and writing about "The Lady of Shalott"; a sixth form was discussing Paradise Lost.

Church-Affiliated Schools. (Westminster School for Boys, Palace St., NW 1; St. Augustine's School, Oxford Road, NW 6.) Probably the only similarity between these two schools is that both are church affiliated. Westminster City is perhaps the most prestigious school in all London, and even the students knew it. St. Augustine's is more like a parish school, with a mixture of abilities, nationalities, and sexes. At St. A's the lessons were highly individualized, with students working on folder projects, the teachers circulating among them giving advice and praise. At Westminster the teaching was traditional but creative. We discovered one class working on a "modern" family history project as is fashionable in North American schools, but the students were pursuing it in much more depth and detail than American classes usually do. We did not see any rod-and-rule teaching at Westminster; nor did we see any stuffy lecturing going on as we had guessed we might.

Can we adequately summarize our impressions and come up with a clear picture of the British schools? No. We recall, however, that when Geoffrey Summerfield was asked about the state of the "new way English" in Great Britain some years ago, he replied something like this: About fifty percent of the teachers are aware of the new way (for simplicity, the new way being Dixon et al.'s view of growth through English); of those, perhaps half think it is a good idea and the other half reject the idea ; of the half who accept the ideas, perhaps half of them are actually teaching that way in their classes. We suspect that that ratio is probably still true today, and as our colleague

at Rushcroft reminded us, under the conservative government and in hard economic times, the older traditional methods tend to reassert themselves.

In view of the discrepancy between theory and practice (the same discrepancy that exists in North American schools, of course), the concern for the relationship between theory and practice that recurred during the consultant sessions seems especially important.

Community Education Centres

In addition to the schools, we were able to visit some supplementary and satellite institutions: the ILEA English Centre, ILEA-TV, Centerprise, and the Geffrye Museum.

The English Centre was funded by the Inner London Education Authority as an in-service center for London English teachers. Its director is Michael Simons, a former teacher (one of our consultants described him as "the best English teacher in London") who knows how to fight for funding and how to inspire teachers to develop their ideas in ways that can be shared with other teachers. Sometimes teachers have released time to work at the Centre, but many have continued on their own once they became involved. The Centre has a library available to teachers, but most impressive to us were the teacher developed materials which are published by the Centre and in use throughout the ILEA. The Centre has also developed a practical teacher magazine with a circulation of over 3000. It was an impressive place, and more than once members of our group we heard to say, "Wouldn't it be terrific if we had something like this in Lansing?"

The second ILEA financed facility we observed was the television center, which is accessible to all ILEA schools. 70-80 different schools use it each year. Students are trained to use the video equipment in addition to preparing programs. Typical student productions are news programs, documentaries, drama, and current affairs. Editing is done by the students under ILEA-TV supervisions. During our visit a 6th form group was using the studio. We were able to observe students involved with script writing, editing, and planning photo displays. There was much chaos at this beginning stage, but we were assured that after this think time, students would get down to business and create a quality production. The director of the center expressed his concern that it might soon be shut down because of lack of funds.

Centerprise Community Bookcenter is not a part of the ILEA system; it was founded as a community cooperative in 1971. It includes a bookstore (with carefully selected books that show a balance of racial, ethnic, and political concerns), coffeeshop, teaching program (English as a second language), and a publishing program. We spent most of our time talking to the editors in this last program and were impressed by their commitment to publish the writing of Hackney residents of all ages. We saw books written by eight and ten-year-old non-native speakers of English (books now being used in the schools); we read a neighborhood history prepared by an elderly man who had never written before; we saw collections of poems and stories that grew from writers workshops sponsored by Centerprise. The place seemed to us a remarkable example of a successful community cooperative program. Alas, like so much that is excellent in London, it is threatened by funding cutbacks.

Finally, we visited the Geffrye Museum, housed in what were once almshouses, now a series of rooms fitted out in English furniture and fixtures

of different periods from 1600 to 1939. The museum also has paintings and artifacts which serve to illustrate life and costumes from other times. School groups can book tours of the museum in advance. By doing so, they obtain the services of a guide who takes them to a particular room. The day we visited, a group was scheduled for the Tudor room. After the 35 or so girls were seated in two rows across the front of the room, the guide began explaining about the furnishings--how they were used, the level in society of the owners, what life was like in that era, including foods, health, and housing. The instructor didn't just talk to the group. She drew from them what they knew of the period and she elaborated from that. To conclude the hour she had one of the students come into the room and put on clothing of the period, explaining what each piece was and how the clothing differend from modern dress.) Of all the institutions we visited, only the Geffry Museum seems reasonable secure in these times of financial cutback. (DD,SH)

We wish to extend special thanks to Judith Hemming, Highbury Fields School, who arranged the school visits for us--no easy task.

Part IV:

MODEL MODELS, or, THEORY INTO PRACTICE

The admonition, "Know your teaching orientation," is not unique to teachers and researchers in England; one can find it cited and recited in North American journals and speeches as well. However, we were struck by the pervasiveness of this bit of advice among the consultants to the Summer London Programme. We were impressed, too, that the British researchers have worked steadily toward the goal of refining their theories (through practice) in the years since the Dartmouth seminar. Although most of their presentations--even those of the gadflies--had a "Dartmouthy" sound to them, new directions in research and teaching are taking place in England: The London Institute crew is interested in English as a second language and in finding ways to soften the impact of the examination system on students; Andrew Wilkinson has turned his attention from oracy to language in all forms, including writing; Leslie Stratta and John Dixon are hard at work on the examination problem, meeting with examing boards and groups and developing new ways of looking at writing; Peter Abbs has published an independent journal of criticism (including criticism of education) and continues to develop fresh approaches to English within the arts; David Holbrook has factored an intelligent view of existentialism into his approach to English; David Allen works with teachers to develop new and balanced curricula; Paddy Creber has expanded his work into new areas, including the use of visual materials in the classroom. There is no question that our consultants practice what they preach, and, insofar as it is possible, their theories seem to mesh with their practice.

Yet, as we have shown in the previous sections, there is no clearcut "British Way," and it is not at all evident that the British schools have changed very much in the post-Dartmouth years. Many teachers do practice what the theories call for; many teachers have contributed to the evolution of those theories; but a great many teachers are still plugging away teaching what we in the states would call "traditional" English. In this section of the report, we want to explore the problems--both theoretical and practical--which make the implementation and development of educational theory difficult. For though there were many implications in our summer study of the British schools, none seems more significant than the quest for a meshing of sound theory with practical classroom application. We see three items that require broad and careful attention both in Great Britain and North America.

First, consideration of the "conventions" of English seem to loom large on both shores. By "conventions" we mean not just spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage (the so-called "basics"), but rhetorical structure and accepted critical views of literature as well. To the extent that English is a knowable, studyable "discipline," its subject matter is these conventions, most of which are described in elementary form in school and college textbeooks and in scholarly detail in professional journals. Harold Rosen reminded us that these "codes" are constantly changing and that they are, at best, an attempt "to put a gloss on" something which is rather ephemeral and not easily described by rules. David Allen argued forcefully that literary study involves both submitting oneself to the text and going beyond the text for individual interpretation. Yet, in the schools, both British and American, a majority of teachers still operate as if the conventions were real, rigid, and teachable. And in the current economic and political climate in both countries, those who would teach the language by instructing (and testing) youngsters in the knowable components are increasingly in control of the

educational system. Still, despite the external pressures, one has to ask, "Why do so many teachers cling to an antiquated view of the nature of languag And an obvious answer presents itself: "Because their school and college English teachers told them that is the way language operates." There is a vicious circle here, and it needs to be broken. Before a large segment of the English teaching profession can engage in theory development or in systematically refining its practices, provision has to be made for teachers to learn more about the nature of language and language learning. We must, in essence, demystify language for teachers (and indirectly for their students).

Second, in order to gauge the workability and effectiveness of a theory and its practical model, one must have a fully understanding of the implications for the schools. John Dixon discussed the fact that as teachers--as human beings--we carry parts of our past with us into the classroom, and that this past can unconsciously affect how we teach. (Thus the rationale for his having us map our own teaching pasts, to help us uncover some of our hidden assumptions and values.) David Allen advised us to look for the victims of our approaches--putting ourselves in their position if possible--to understand the full implications of what we propose to teach. Allen also urged a sort of systematic eclecticism, realizing that no single ideology is likely to be completely effective or applicable. Without being all things to all people, a model must extend to a large percentage of the teaching (and by implication student) population.

Third, as our consultants stressed, it is terribly important for teachers simply to have a theory on which they base their teaching. Development of a philosophy is not easy on either side of the Atlantic. Teachers are too busy, too tired; when there is a kid pounding on the office door and thirty-five more of them waiting in a classroom, one is hard pressed to do anything more than pass out worksheets. For the sort of thinking and collaborative research recommended by Margaret Spencer to take place, teachers quite simply have to have time and support for study.

And just how practical is that? Are there any possibilities in Great Britain or North America for the sort of systematic training, retraining, and development of teachers that seems necessary? We are both optimistic and gloomy.

On the bright side are places like the ILEA English Centre and the London Institute, which essentially trust teachers and have found ways to give them support. These insitutions have already inspired movement toward an English teacher center at Michigan State, and there are, of course, other similar programs underway in the states, among them the Bay Area Writing Project and MSU's Institute for Research on Teaching.

But the numbers of teachers in such programs--even a large program like the BAWP--are very very small, and often the participants or "alumni" find themselves in the position of being very much alone when they are back in their schools and school districts.

As this copy of our summer report was being typed came word that the U. S. Secretary of Education, Terrel Bell (the very man who proposes doing away with the Department of Education) has launched a personal "quest" to establish "excellence" as a priority in education. Such a "quest" sounds very much like window dressing, especially in an era when federal funding for education is disappearing rapidly. Bell will, apparently, focus attention on

"preparation for the transition to higher education," which means he will probably be offering a forum for those who would make college entrance standards more and more rigid, relying on the enforcement of standards as a way of promoting change in the schools.

Well, to those of us who summered in Great Britain, the direction of Secretary Bell's "quest" seems silly indeed. We've seen the paralyzing effect of the exam system on fifth and sixth form teachers in the British schools. We've seen the creative and humanistic programs of the lower forms disappear and children toil away at their examination books or read classic books (often books over their heads) in an attempt to get ready for the O-levels.

How much better it would be, we think, if Secretary Bell, instead of driving down the old road of college preparation, would launch a building program with roads leading to better teacher preparation and professional development. Wouldn't it be super if Bell would come up with money for more projects like teacher centers and writing projects? Couldn't he usefully work toward excellence in education by launching a personal quest to cut down on teacher workloads and to limit class size?

He won't of course, in part because true excellence is expensive, and in part because true excellence involves a tremendous amount of work.

Assuming that the U. S. federal government is not going to provide the support needed, in true Little Red Hen spirit, we may just have to do it ourselves, the "we" in the previous clause referring to:

--those of us who teach in universities: who can help to change undergraduate and graduate programs from attempts to indoctrinate students into the "new way" toward engaging students in groping toward developing and implementing their own theories of English education.

--those of us active in professional organizations: who can use the muscle of those groups (admittedly not as much muscle as the federal government) to bring about improved teacher in-service training on a much broader scale then before.

--those of us who teach in the schools: who can harangue and pester administrators, asking and begging them for time for English faculties to do the sort of introspective thinking and self-education that is required.

--those of us who teach: who have access to the raw data that can provide the basis for a genuine revolution in the way English is taught in the schools--the student/learners themselves.

Perhaps the best way to begin any reevaluation of theory and practice is to realize that the teacher is the first and most important model that students have--that is the starting point.

(MN, SJ)

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Educational Theory and Practice

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Medway, Peter. Finding a Language. Writers and Readers/Chameleon, 1980.

Meek, Maragret, et al. The Cool Web.

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(RB, JF, MPC)

To those who found this report in-groupy, we apologize (though not for having become a closely-knit group). To those who found it cryptic, we suggest that you buy us a beer and we'll discuss The British Way at considerably greater length.

ENGLISH EDUCATION IN LONDON

Syllabus

Texts:

Abbs, Peter. English Broadsheets (First Series). (Heinemann, 1969).

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[1]Britton, James et al. The Development of Writing Abilities 11-18). (Macmillan Education, 1975).

[2]Creber, J. W. Patrick. Sense and Sensitivity. (U. London, 1965).

Dixon, John. Growth Through English. (Oxford, 1975).

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[1]Dillon's reports this is in the process of being reprinted. If you can locate a copy on this side of the Atlantic, bring it, please.

[2]Out of print. Instructor will have loaner copies.

Calendar

Monday, June 27

Social hour and initial get-together, Columbia Hotel, 7 PM.

Tuesday, June 29

Consultant: Margaret Spencer, London Institute of Education
Topic: Recent Trends in British Education
Reading: Salmon and Meek et al.

Wednesday, June 30 School Visits

Thuraday, July 1

Consultant: Andrew Wilkinson, University of East Anglia
Topic: Oral and Written Language Development
Reading: Wilkinson et al.

Friday, July 2 School Visits

Monday, July 5 School Visits

Tuesday, July 6

Consultant: John Dixon, formerly Bretton Hall College
Topic: Growth Through English (in the Perspective of the Eighties)
Reading: Dixon

Wednesday, July 7

Consultant: Leslie Stratta, University of Birmingham
Topic: Research in Writing
Reading: Wilkinson et al.

Thursday, Friday, July 8-9 School Visits

Monday, July 12 School Visits

Tuesday, July 13

Consultant: Harold Rosen, London Institute of Education
Reading: Britton et al.

Wednesday, July 14 School Visits

Thursday, July 15

Consultant: David Allen
Reading: Allen

Friday, July 16 School Visits

Monday, July 19

Consultant: Peter Abbs, University of Sussex
Reading: Abbs (2 items)

Tuesday-Thursday, July 20-22

Consultant: J. W. Patrick Creber, University of Exeter
Reading: Creber

Monday, July 26

Consultant: Geoffrey Summerfield, York University
Reading: Medway
Topic: Intermediating: From Private to Public

Tuesday, July 27

Consultant: David Holbrook, Downing College, Cambridge
Reading: Holbrook

Thursday, July 28 - Thursday, August 5

Plans to be formed by the group. Possible visits to teacher centres, other schools and colleges, field trips to literary sites. Also debriefing and discussion of observations and perceptions.

Participant List

Name	Address
Ruth Bauer	1213 Avon Blvd., Cheshire, CT 06410
M. P. Cavanaugh	2338 Bay Woods Ct., Bay City, MI 48706
Diane Deremo	612 Rosewood SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49605
Judith Feldmann	2791 Brookside Blvd., Jackson, MI 49203
Craig Gunn	21561 Pearl Beach, Coldwater, MI 49036
Shirley Harkless	2742 Bellwood, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Nancy Johnson	10905 A Glen Acres Dr. S. Seattle, WA 98168
Douglas Jones	303 Hillcrest, Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Marjori Mammano	5800 Arlington Ave., Riverdale, NY 10471
Mary Maguire	3700 Mctavish St., Montreal, Canada H3A1YZ
Matthew Nikkari	1836 Nemoke Trail, Haslett, MI 48840
Shirley Washington	5181 Beookfield, E. Lansing, MI 48823